Remarks

The above-referenced application has been reviewed in light of the Examiner's Office Action dated October 7, 2003. Claims 1, 10 and 33 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, Claims 1-39 are currently pending in this application. Claims 17-32 have been allowed. The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter is gratefully acknowledged. The Examiner has not yet indicated the disposition of Claims 36, 37, 38 or 39. The Examiner's reconsideration of the remaining rejection in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-16 and 33-35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,809,247 to Richardson et al. ("the '247 reference"). Applicants' respectfully submit that amended Claims 1-16 and 33-35 are not rendered obvious by the cited reference for the reasons set forth below.

Some elements of the amended Claims are neither disclosed nor suggested by the Richardson reference. Claims 1, 10 and 33 have been amended to clarify the features for which Applicants seek protection. Support for this amendment may also be found in the Specification as originally filed at, for example, page 8, lines 16-19, and page 9, lines 3-16.

The Examiner has indicated that Claims 1-16 and 33-35 are rendered obvious by the '247 patent to Richardson et al. In the Office Action at pp. 3-4, the Examiner also indicated uncertainty as to what was being synchronized in Applicants' claimed invention. It is respectfully submitted that Richardson's disclosure does not teach or suggest playing dynamic annotations from hypermedia documents "while maintaining synchronized playback of said at least one annotation in ones of said hypermedia documents with said at least one annotation in others of said hypermedia documents" as recited in each of amended independent Claims 1, 10 and 33.

Thus, on the issue of 'synchronized playback', there is a distinct difference between Richardson's teaching and that of Applicants' presently claimed invention. According to Richardson et al., a stop vector specifies that a tour should go to a

particular web site, and once that web site is loaded, a particular media component (audio/video or animation) should be rendered. This is what Richardson means by synchronization.

In contrast, synchronization as defined according to Applicants' presently amended claims comprises much more. The present disclosure does teach that a web site should be loaded, and once loaded, media rendering should begin. In significant addition, the media rendering itself involves synchronization in the presently claimed invention of Claims 1, 10 and 33, where the media includes a dynamic annotation in each hypermedia document that is synchronizable with a dynamic annotation in another hypermedia document. Thus, for example, graphics rendering is synchronized with audio playback in embodiments of the present disclosure where each of these hypermedia documents uses a synchronizable dynamic annotation.

Accordingly, the element of "a playing system for playing said dynamic annotations that have been distributed by the distribution system, said playing system enabling loading of multiple ones of said hypermedia documents each comprising at least one of said annotations *while maintaining synchronized playback of said at least one annotation in ones of said hypermedia documents with said at least one annotation in others of said hypermedia documents*" as recited in amended independent Claim 1, or similarly recited in amended independent Claims 10 and 33, is neither taught nor suggested by Richardson et al. Thus, this element in combination with other recited elements of the amended Claims 1, 10 and 33 render said Claims novel and non-obvious over the teachings of the '247 patent to Richardson et al. as well as over the other references of record in this case.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent Claims 1, 10 and 33 are each in condition for allowance for at least the reasons stated above. Since each of the dependent Claims 2-9, 11-16, 18-32 and 34-37 and 39 depend from one of the above Claims and necessarily include each of the elements and limitations thereof, it is respectfully submitted that these Claims are also in condition for allowance for at least the reasons stated, and for reciting additional patentable subject matter.

Claims 17-32 have been allowed. Claim 38 depends from Claim 17 but its disposition was not indicated in the Office Action. It is respectfully submitted that Claim 38 is also in condition for allowance for at least the same reasons as Claim 17, and for reciting additional patentable subject matter. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, reconsideration of the rejections and an early and favorable allowance of this case is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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